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ABSTRACT

The Teacher Education Alternatives Model (TEAM) project is an attempt to implement in a teacher preparation program many of the principles and ideas articulated in the humanistic movement in education. The main process themes--experiencing, decision-making, cooperating, and evaluating--are implemented through four learning modes: (1) field experiences; (2) goal setting; (3) seminars; and (4) learning projects. A decrease in time devoted to traditional courses is complemented by increases in student interaction with faculty and materials by way of conferences, seminars, and projects, and in field experiences. An elementary education major in TEAM typically spends five quarters in field experiences at various schools. Another feature is the integration of subject areas and of on-campus learning with field experiences. A differentiated staffing pattern is provided with faculty serving in three basic roles: coordinator; advisory group leaders who meet weekly with students for personalized needs related to learning, goal setting, and evaluation; and special area faculty responsible for subject matter and field supervision. (Author/JD)

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The TEAM Project

(Teacher Education Alternatives Model)

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Part I

SUMMARY

The TEAM (Teacher Education Alternatives Model) Project was initiated at St. Cloud State University in April, 1975, as a result of needs which have arisen over several years. The project presently involves 7-10 faculty members in developing and implementing a humanistic, interdepartmental teacher preparation program in which students work closely with peers and faculty members over several quarters.

The four main process themes (experiencing, decision-making, cooperating and evaluating), are implemented through four learning modes: field experiences, goal setting, seminars and projects. A decrease in time devoted to traditional courses is complemented by increases in student interaction with faculty and materials via conferences, seminars and projects, and in field experiences. An elementary education major in TEAM typically spends five quarters in field experiences at various schools. Another feature is the integration of subject areas and of on-campus learning with field experiences.

A differentiated staffing pattern is provided with faculty members having either partial or full-time commitments. There are three basic roles for faculty: 1) coordinator; 2) advisory group leaders who meet weekly with students for personalized, needs-related learning, goal setting and evaluation; and 3) special-area faculty responsible for subject matter and field supervision.

Preliminary evaluation procedures have provided strong indications of the value to students of the field experiences, the relationships with faculty, and opportunities for choices in learning. Plans include evaluating student attitudes and effectiveness upon and following graduation.

Part II COMPREHENSIVE EXPLANATION

Description and Development of the Program

The TEAM Project was initiated by the faculty and administration of the College of Education as a result of a series of studies, task force reviews, and smaller projects which had identified the following needs:

a.) more field experiences in pre-service teacher education;
b.) better integration of coursework and field experiences;
c.) better communication and cooperation among college departments;
d.) greater involvement of students in program development; and
e.) better methods for evaluating students and programs.

In April, 1975, four faculty members representing the elementary education, psychology and student teaching departments were selected to devote their efforts to project planning and development on a full-time basis during the following summer. An advisory group consisting of faculty representatives of the six directly affected departments was also formed. Support was provided for planning and development and the philosophic base and a model for the pilot project began to emerge. Due to the crucial need for student and practicing teacher input, a small pilot project involving thirty-three students was begun in the fall of the 1957-76 academic year. The Campus Laboratory School was the primary site for field development for the pilot project.

During the first year, a great deal of revision and development occurred, and the basic model continued to evolve. In the second year, the 1976-77 academic year, four area elementary schools provided field experiences, enrollment has increased to some 40 students and the faculty has increased to seven: three with essentially full-time commitments and four on a joint-appointment basis. Part of the time commitment of faculty continues to be

directed toward development and evaluation. Projections are for a gradual decrease in faculty development time with a corresponding increase in student enrollment over the coming two or three years until the program becomes self-supporting with an enrollment of approximately 100 students.

Selection and admission of students for the TEAM program are accomplished through interviews while retention is an on-going process based on self-analysis, evaluation of program experiences and faculty counseling during students' tenure in the program.

Implementation of the on-campus aspects of the TEAM program involves a differentiated staffing model. Faculty members serve in one or more of three roles. The TEAM Coordinator (1/3 faculty position) is responsible for scheduling, record keeping, budgeting, and other administrative duties. Each Advisory Group Leader (1/3 faculty position) is responsible for weekly two-hour meetings with his/her 15-20 advisory group members with the advisory groups being the primary means of dealing with the personal-professional growth of each student. The Special Area Faculty members have responsibility for assuring that all students in the program develop knowledge and skills in each of the program special areas. For example, the faculty member responsible for the social studies area (or psychology or science, etc.) would develop and present seminars and learning experiences which would contribute to the students' gaining skills in the teaching of social studies. TEAM students meet for at least eight hours per week in special area seminars.

Some special area faculty members are also designated as field supervisors who work with the public school cooperating teachers in field coordination and supervision. Field supervisors also represent TEAM faculty on the Field Experiences Advisory Panel which also involves students and cooperating teachers in coordinating field experiences as well as in influencing program development and implementation.

TEAM students spend five hours per week in field settings throughout their initial quarter. During three of the next four quarters they typically spend ten hours per week in field settings. The final quarter in TEAM involves students in full-time teaching experiences in school settings for at least six weeks with a variable exit dependent upon teaching performance.

Two basic components of the conceptual framework of TEAM are the Process Themes and the Learning Modes. The four major process themes emanate from the TEAM philosophy and assumptions and prevade the TEAM experience. These processes are: experiencing, decision making, cooperating, and evaluating. The four Learning Modes through which the process themes are implemented are as follows: Seminars and Presentations, Goal Setting and Conferences, Projects and Learning Activities, and Laboratory Field Experiences.

Objectives and Goals

Philosophy and Assumptions

The TEAM Project is an attempt to implement in a teacher preparation program many of the principles and ideas articulated in the emerging "humanistic" movement in education and psychology of the 1960's and 1970's. Thus, much of the philosophy undergirding the project springs from the perceptual psychology and self actualization themes of such writers as Arthur Combs, Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow as well as the cooperating theme of David Johnson and the orientation learning through experience suggested by John Dewey.

The beliefs and assumptions which form the basis of the TEAM philosophy follow:

1. The effective teacher is, first of all, an effective person. Major attention must be given to the growth and development of each individual as a total person.

2. A crucial element in learning is the meaning which the individual perceives in his/her experiences.

3. The program, as much as is feasible, should develop from perceived student needs and allow for student choice and responsibility.

4. Faculty should serve as models.

5. Program components should be as integrated as possible in order to avoid duplication and promote meaning.

6. Field experiences should be integrated throughout a teacher preparation program.

7. Pre-service teacher education should be viewed as the first phase of a life-long, continuous process of professional development.

8. The principal criterion to be used in assessing the effectiveness of an individual in a teacher education program would be his/her demonstrated ability to facilitate learning. The evaluation of this effectiveness should be the joint responsibility of the individual, his/her peers, and all professionals involved in the program.

9. Better procedures must be explored to promote cooperation among the individuals and groups involved in the preparation of teachers.

10. The program must have processes and procedures built into it so that it is continually evolving and changing to meet developing needs.

TEAM Goals

The following goals are, by intent, broad in scope; however, they are basic expectations of all TEAM students. The goals were developed cooperatively by students and faculty and serve to underscore the view that a program is only as effective as its graduates. The goals are intended to serve as common ends for each student; however, the means of attaining these goals can be many and varied.

Upon completion of the TEAM experience and requisite for certification, each student should be able to:

A. Curriculum Goals

1. prepare and defend the validity of an education program for a single child, given access to "standard" school information and personnel, and given "normal" parameteres of a "typical" school;

2. given a set of educational objectives, identify at least two instructional approaches (strategies, procedures, methodologies) for accomplishing the objectives; develop a personal set of criteria to evaluate the instructional approaches;
3. plan, defend the validity of and carry out educational units for a group of children, given access to media, resources, "standard" school records and personnel, and given the "normal" parameters of a school;
4. prepare and defend his/her analysis and evaluation of a curriculum for a school, given appropriate information about the school and given the opportunity to seek additional information;

B. Communication Goals

5. demonstrate commitment to the value of shared decision making, cooperative learning, and the uniqueness of all persons;
6. demonstrate skill in, and commitment to establishing and maintaining two-way communication with parents, students, and colleagues;

C. Personal Development Goals

7. demonstrate skill in, and commitment to self-evaluation of skills, concepts, attitudes, and values;
8. demonstrate a continuing commitment to the value of being a well-read, informed, and knowledgeable person;
9. demonstrate development and cultivation of a positive self-concept in his/herself and others;
10. articulate, document and defend a personal philosophy of education and a theory of learning and teaching; and demonstrated commitment to his/her philosophy and theory;

D. Societal Goals

11. demonstrate skill in, and commitment to identifying various biases and "hidden curriculum" in books, materials and his/her own actions;
12. Demonstrate knowledge of the contributions and life styles of various racial, cultural, and economic groups in the world.

Personnel Involved

All faculty members involved in the project have been on a loan or joint appointment basis from departments within the College of Education. No new faculty have been employed to be involved in TEAM or to replace those on loan. The cooperating departments (Student Teaching, Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Psychology, Campus Laboratory School, Special Education,

and Learning Resources) have supported the project through the assignment of faculty or the provision of instructional services.

Cooperating public school teachers and principals have voluntarily provided supervision and developmental input through the Field Experience Advisory Panel.

Consultants from the University of Florida and the University of Minnesota have provided short-term consultation services.

Budget

Program Development - Direct Expenses

Salaries	$ 5,450	(project planning and evaluation, summer, 1975)
Salaries	68,625	(instructional, 1975-76)
Salaries	1,000	(project evaluation, summer, 1976)
Salaries	72,000	(instructional, 1976-77)
Consultants	700	
Secretarial	1,500	
Supplies	2,000	
Travel and Supervision	1,000	

Source of Funds - Regular College of Education Budget Allocations

Relationship to Other Budgets - As stated in Section C, cooperating departments have provided faculty members on a loan or joint-appointment basis.

Contribution to the Improvement of Teacher Education

Student Reaction - Although the program has not met the needs of a small percentage of students who seem to need more direction, various questionnaires as well as written and informal student reactions have indicated a strong positive student response. Strengths most frequently indicated by students are: meaningful field experiences and seminars, the opportunity for selecting alternative means of learning, the opportunity to be responsible for planning their professional development, opportunity to work closely with peers and faculty members, and stronger feelings about wanting to become a teacher.

Faculty Reaction - Faculty members express a great satisfaction of working together, the opportunity for professional development, and a sense of involvement in development of a program; however, frustration over increased time involved has been expressed.

Other Faculty Members - Although many faculty members have volunteered to contribute in various ways, the questions of how to properly relate alternative programs to existing programs persist. These questions range from faculty involvement to student registration and record keeping.

Other Publics - Acceptance by cooperating public schools and teachers has been very positive and encouraging. The positive feedback from these outside groups serves to provide renewed incentive to the project.

Overall Contributions - There is evidence that the TEAM Project addresses the needs identified by the College of Education and significant progress is being made toward attainment of goals.

Evaluation Methods and Results

The evaluation process includes formative evaluation, which provides data for adjustments while the program is underway, as well as summative evaluation after specified periods of time. Students, staff and field personnel are involved in various aspects of evaluation.

Formative evaluation of the TEAM Project includes: evaluation of program components by students and staff members; evaluation of laboratory and field experiences by professional personnel and students; and input from Field Experience Advisory Panel Members.

Plans are underway to gather data concerning TEAM students' reactions/perceptions and teaching performance relative to TEAM goals compared to a control group during the spring quarter of 1977, prior to the graduation of the initial group of TEAM students. Although the first students have yet to graduate from the TEAM program, and final program evaluation data have yet to be collected, initial indications are quite positive.

The ultimate evaluation of the TEAM program will necessarily focus on the validity of the TEAM assumptions, beliefs and goals in preparing more effective teachers. This evaluation should include a follow-up study of students who have been enrolled in TEAM.